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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MAPUTO 000746

SIPDIS

STATE FOR DS/IP/AF, DS/IP/ITA, INL/AAE

POSTS FOR RSO, PSO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#)

SUBJECT: MAPUTO EMPLOYEES ASSAULTED

1. On May 31, 2005, at approximately 1845, one AmEmb Maputo AmCit Diplomat and one FSN, were assaulted at gunpoint one block from the US Mission Public Affairs Office building and half a block from a local police station. The incident occurred when AmCit had given the FSN a ride home. After they pulled up to the residence, both employees got out of the car to retrieve some items from the trunk. As they did so, a vehicle pulled up and two armed men got out and robbed the victims at gunpoint. Personal items, money, identity documents, a Mozambican passport, and cell phones were taken. The victims reacted as they have been instructed, complied with the direction of the assailants, and were left at the scene unharmed. The victims were able to call Post One, but insufficient information was obtained about the victim's location. The RSO and ARSO responded to the Embassy and shortly thereafter, the two victims arrived. Statements were taken and the AmCit drove home, while the RSO and ARSO drove the FSN home. When the RSO and ARSO arrived at the FSN's home, and the scene of the crime, four "guards" were present in front of or near the residence. Three were individual private guards not associated with a company, and one was an employee of Alfa Security company. The guards were questioned about the incident, but all stated that they did not see anything and did not even know that an assault had occurred until after it happened. None of the guards was able to provide any descriptive information about the assailants or the vehicle used. However, the guards stated that assaults such as this were a common occurrence on this street. Although there were four guards at the residence when the RSO arrived, all of these guards were conveniently absent during the time which the crime occurred, only 30 minutes prior.

2. The RSO and ARSO then proceeded to the police station that services the diplomatic community to file an incident report. After fifteen minutes of preparation on the part of the officer, five of which involved finding a suitable chair for him sit in, the officer began the police report. During this time, one of the suspected perpetrators called the RSO's phone. This occurred due to the fact that the RSO had called the FSN's and AmCit's phones after she heard of the incident and now the current holder of the phone was returning the call. The ARSO spoke to the suspect in Portuguese using the guise of a person dialing a wrong number, but still trying to maintain a conversation. The person on the phone provided a name which was passed on to the officer. During this time, the officer seemed confused and tried to ignore a situation which was beyond "writing a report". The following morning, the RSO FSN Investigator accompanied the FSN to the police station to complete the report.

3. Since the incident occurred, some of the identity items were recovered by Mozambican citizens who contacted the Embassy, including the passport and the Mozambican issued diplomatic identity card.

4. A security notice was sent out mission-wide to alert employees of the incident and remind them of the proper course of action if one were faced with a similar situation.

5. RSO Comment: The after-action on the part of the police is yet another example of the ineptitude and inability of the local police to effectively combat crime and investigate and react to a crime after the fact. Although the local police regularly complain about a lack of resources to do their job, in this situation they did not even pick up the phone to follow up on the leads provided. Even though the RSO and ARSO offered to transport them or an investigative team to the scene to follow up with the guards, the police refused. The police were actually reluctant to take a report of the incident when they learned that the RSO and ARSO were not the victims of the crime, but were simply reporting the crime. It is important to note that the RSO office has a good relationship with this police station and the fault does not lie with officers, but with the training and operational management. This is but one of many examples that the RSO office has encountered with the lack of the local authorities abilities to investigate crime, even though AmEmb Maputo regularly sends local police commanders to ILEA training in Gaborone and New Mexico (the commandant of this particular police station returned from New Mexico one month prior). It is uncertain if the elements of training at ILEA are not being passed down to the working level, or if there are cultural barriers preventing a shift in the operational mindset of the police and empowerment of street officers. Several weeks ago the daughter of the President was the

victim of an assault at a local caf, during which her bodyguard was critically wounded. Unlike other assault cases, the police moved quickly to apprehend the three assailants, demonstrating their capabilities when they are properly motivated. Although the recent upswing in crime has been met with the response of the Policia da Republica de Mocambique (PRM) starting a task force of special officers deployed at night on motorcycles (the PRM recently received a donation of approximately 300 motorcycles from the Chinese government - actual quantity yet to be verified), the effectiveness of this force has yet to been seen.

La Lime